

Full Council – 19 July 2023

Written question from Ms E Brothers to the Leader

Please would the Leader of Council explain why no response has been received/published to my request for information at the 22 February 2023 meeting on the budget and what is the answer to the question?

Question Submitted to Meeting on Wednesday 22 February 2023

In respect of the budget 2023-24 Equality Impact Statement (last paragraph of The Aims, Objectives and Expected Outcomes and the responses to Key Questions to Consider in Assessing Potential Impact), what are the main Equality Impact Assessments planned by each Cabinet Member in fulfilling their reserved obligations?
Equality Act (2010) S149

Response

I can only apologise that a response was not provided as agreed.

As you have rightly indicated the EIA for the budget paper is a high-level EIA. As we progress to implementing savings, where required, a detailed EIA will be undertaken as part of the implementation process and a detailed response will follow.

The budget and council tax setting 2023/24 report received by Full Council at its budget setting meeting on 22 February 2023 identified that as a public body, the council must have due regard to our equality duties when making decisions. Specifically, the Council has to comply with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This provides that decision makers must have due regard to the elimination of discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advancing equalities, and fostering good relations between different groups (race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/belief and marriage/civil partnership).

The report highlighted that the savings proposals, may require further consultation and appropriate equality impact assessments to be considered before implementation can take place. There is no automatic requirement therefore, for an equality impact assessment to be undertaken for each and every budget proposal and as such it is for the portfolio holder with their service director to determine, with appropriate legal advice as necessary, whether an equality impact assessment is required before a saving can be confirmed for delivery.

Subsequent to Full Council approval of the budget at that meeting, each portfolio holder, with their respective service directors, have instigated the necessary planning and preparatory work required to deliver budget savings proposals with due consideration to the need for equality impact assessment as appropriate. Some of these impact assessments may be internal to the council as they relate to staffing matters. If there were any specific areas of budget savings that were of interest to you in respect of equality impact considerations, I am sure that the relevant portfolio holder will be only too pleased to respond.